A DEFENCE OF Christian Liberty

To the LORDS Table;

Except in case of Excommunication and Suspension

Wherein many Arguments, Queres, Suppositions, and Objections are answered by plain Texts, and consent of Scriptures.

As also some Positions answered by way of a short Conference which the Author hath had with divers, both in Citie and Countrey.

All which are profitable to inform to truth, and lawfull obedience to Authoritie.

By *John Graunt*, who beareth witnesse to the Faith.

Jerem. 10. 23.

O Lord, I know that the way of Man is not in himselfe, it is not in Man that walketh to direct his steps.

1 John 2. 26.

These things have I written unto you concerning them which seduce you.

2 Tim. 3. 13.

But evill men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

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THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

OUR Lord once asked a queſtion of his Diſciples; Are yee able to drink of the Cup that I ſhall drink of, and to be baptized with the Baptiſme that I am baptized with? *In the anſwer he agrees with his ſervants, that it ſhould be ſo with them,* Mat. 20. 22. 23. *And as this was the caſe of* James *and* John; *ſo it was* Peters *and all the faithfuls alſo, and is now, and ever was Gods ſervants caſe and condition, to ſuffer with him, as truly as they ſhall reigne with him. For as the ſhadow followes the naturall body; ſo afflictions follow the Church, the children of Truth, his myſticall Body. And as there is an univerſall daily prooſe of this truth; ſo in particular at* Woolchurch, Anno 1645. *for a modeſt and privat teſtimony of the two witneſſes of ſound Doctrine, the teſtifier thereof was teſtified againſt with contempt and reproach, which for the truths ſake he hath patiently born, not rendring evill for evill, or railing for railing, but contrariwiſe bleſſing, knowing that the Lord calls his ſervants thereunto, that they may inherit a bleſſing. And notwithſtanding the Pariſhioners his ſuffering, he being not thereby diſcouraged, went on in diſcovery of the truth, and in oppoſition of the*

miſtakes, ſo that the queſtions were brought to publication in a ſmall ſhort Treatiſe called, Chriſtian liberty to the Lords Table: *againſt which authorized Tract I have received divers exceptions from ſeverall friends, yea, friends, which doth the more take my affection: And the ſaid exceptions under differing notions, as below are mentioned. All which, with my defenſive anſwers to each, I again preſent with open face to the world. And in concluſion, a briefe recitall of ſome ſhort Diſcourſes I have had in my journey in the Countries with ſuch as are oppoſite to the preſent government. And becauſe ſince the time my ſmall Taper was lighted, there hath riſen a man of much eminency, a burning glory, a ſtarre of great ſhining, holding forth with Scripture, Learning and Arts, the ſubject and matter of my meditations, yet the manner being different, and my phraſe, ſtile, and knowledge like my ſelfe, low and mean, I therefore commend my thoughts to ſuch of my own capacity, caſting my mite into the Lords Treaſury, and thruſting in my weake and mean Sickle of plain workmanſhip into the Lords great harveſt, praying that all that read it with the ſame affection that I write it, may gain the like benefit.*

A Defence of Christian Liberty to the LORDS Table.

THE first thing I received by way of oppesition to my book, were six Arguments.

My first Argument against your Treatise (saith my friend) called, *Christian liberty to the Lords Table*, is this:

Because the Scripture doth not testifie of any particular man converted by the Sacrament alone: Therefore it is a reason to me to beleeve the Sacrament doth not convert.

My Defence to your first Argument.

Friend, by your first Argument you seem to divide between the Scriptures and the Sacrament (in these words, *By the Sacrament alone*) which is a mistaking the point in hand: For my book is intituled, *Christian liberty to the Lords Table*; the Title thereof shewing and preaching the quite contrary: for there can bee neither Christians so called, nor Sacraments so instituted where there is no Scriptures. And that this might have been understood by you, consider the Texts of the Old and New Testament alledged for proofe, with the place, Preacher, and hearers instanced, at *Woolchurch* in *London*. Secondly, there is no example that the reading the Scriptures doe convert: should any man beleeve therefore the Lord doth not many times convert by reading? We have no expresse Scripture to testifie that *Peter*, *James* and *John*, with the rest of the Apostles by name, were outwardly baptized; shall we therefore not beleeve it? We doe not read that the Apostles, Evangelists, or Disciples of Christ, did once or ever use the Lords prayer, although he commanded it, *Luke* 11. 2. is it therefore unawfull to use it? And that the Supper of the Lord is a teaching Ordinance, as it is a confir-

confirming ordinance, we shall have many times occasion to cleare in making my defence.

His second Argument.

I doe not read in Scripture that the Sacrament was administred to any Christian Assembly, till some of that Assembly were begotten to God by the word of truth, which makes me beleeve that it was for the Saints sakes onely when it was instituted and administred; and so to confirm and not to convert, but to commemorate and strengthen.

My defence to your second Argument.

I doe not read in all the Scriptures that the participation of the Lords Supper was denied any common beleever for want of speciall faith, and not being a spirituall Christian: for although God did in a speciall sense institute and ordain all his ordinances for his elects sake for their regeneration and confirmation, their spirituall communion with God in Christ; yet I affirm, that among these faithfull, the outward and common Christians did in the Apostles times, & may now communicate in the outward & common things of the word & Sacraments: for *they that gladly received the word, were baptized, and continued in the Doctrine, Sacraments and Prayer, Acts* 2.41,42. And as it was thus at *Jerusalem*, so it was at *Samaria, Acts* 8. *Corinth, Ephesus, Colosse*, and in all the Churches of the Saints. And therefore the outward signes of the Sacraments were not ordained for the Saints onely, but it is with Christians in our time, as it was with *Abraham* and his seed, that is, the elect, in these words, *Gen.* 17.7. *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*: but the outward signes of the covenant belonged to all his seed ingenerall, and to the seed of all others that came to acknowledge the truth, and beleeve the Scriptures.

His third Argument.

Because the right use of the Sacrament is onely and alone with the faithfull; they onely have spirituall communion with the Lord, in whose remembrance it was instituted.

My defence to your third Argument.

In my defence to your second Argument, the inference and consequence thereof is, that the use of the Lords Supper is not for the Saints alone: for although the Saints have the blisse and best use of the Sacrament, yet not the onely use. And as they have a speciall right, as spiritual Christians, by faith to eat Christs flesh, and drink

his

his bloud to their confirmation: so the unregenerate elect and common Christians have a true right to the communication of the outward signes to their information and instruction, amongst the faithful. For as the Paschal Lamb was generally to be eaten by both sorts of beleevers, *Exod.* 12.43,44. *Circumcise him* (saith the Text) *and then shall he eat thereof*: so baptize the Christian, and let him examine himself touching the knowledge of the Lords Supper, and so let him eat, 1 *Cor.* 11.25,26,27,28. And here take notice by the way, that this examining a mans selfe is all one with the preparation to the Passeover: for the true use of understanding the Lords Supper, and discerning the Lords body in knowing the meaning of the signes, is to lead us to repent of our sins: and to repent is to eate no leavened bread; for this is to put out the leaven out of our houses, *Exod.* 12.15. And the Apostles admonition to the Church of *Corinth* is in effect the same that *Hezekiah* praieth for, that the people before they came to the Passeover, might *prepare their hearts to seek God, and that the Lord would pardon them that were not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary*, 2 *Chron.* 30.19. *For* (saith the Text vers. 18.) *a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim* and *Manasses, Issachar and Zebulon, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the Passover, &c.* Observe how the Church of *Corinth* and the Church of the Jewes are paralleld, and although many defective in both, yet in neither any denied. And this promotes the free mercy and goodnesse of God, that the unregenerate are not restrained from no outward ordinance that might further their conversion.

His fourth Argument.

That the Lords Supper doth commemorate and confirm, is very cleare and evident from the Scriptures: but that it should be a means of conversion, that is dubious.

My defence to your fourth Argument.

That which with the Word doth commemorate Christs death, that doth also signifie, teach, and shew forth, or is a means to attain grace even so often as it is communicated with the word, *Luke* 22.19. 1 *Cor.* 11.26. And this is a truth not dubious but perspicuous. For as by the eye the outward sight doth affect the heart within, or inwardly, *Lam.* 3.51. so doth the calling to mind, or remembrance, as *David* saith, *Psal.* 77.3. *I remembred God*, saith he, and what did it lead him to, or teach him? He gives us the answer himselfe. *And I was troubled.* And what was his trouble but godly sorrow and repentance?

pentance? And upon the sight of the bitter passion of our Lord, which was the same death the Lords Supper holds forth to us, it is said, *Luk.*23 48. *And all the people which came together to that sight, beholding the things that were done, smote their breasts and returned.* Wherefore be satisfied of the converting operation of the Sacrament. And the truth is, you confesse it in all your Arguments, in that you doe acknowledge it doth commemorate and call to mind. I pray consider what S. *Paul* writes to *Timothy*, 1 *Tim.*4.6. *If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good Minister of Jesus Christ.* So then to call to mind, or to put men in remembrance of the truth, is a part of the ministery of the Gospel, and that the participation of the Sacrament doth both, our Lord and his servant testifies, *Luke* 22. 1 *Cor.*11. The more fuller clearing hereof, I refer to my defence against the two Ministers five *Queres* hereafter mentioned.

The fifth Argument.

That the Word and Works of God are a means to beget grace, the Scriptures plentifully affirm, and they need no expositon at all; for they speak out the glory of him that made them, the wisdome, bounty, and goodnesse of God which leadeth to repentance: but the Sacrament, as the Bow in the clouds, cannot without the exposition of Scriptures; and therefore not teaching.

My defence to your fifth Argument.

You say God hath made his works as his word, the outward means to beget grace, and they need no exposition, for they are made of God apparent to all, *Psal.*97.6. but you say, to is not the Sacrament. Nor, say I, the written Scriptures manifested to them that have them not: but as the Rain-bow in the clouds ordained by the word of God, doth teach to the eye Gods faithfulnesse in his promise and covenant, *Gen.*9.13. even so doe the Sacraments, which are likewise ordained by the same word, inform the heart by the eye, through seeing Christs death visibly represented by the elements, so often as by the word they are consecrated, and by beleevers communicated; and doe thereby teach, set forth, and declare Gods faithfulnesse in his promise and covenant made with mankind in and through the death of Christ. And Bread and Wine sacramentally are to none so, but to such as beleeve the Scriptures.

His sixth Argument.

The Word and Works which are outward means to beget grace, are

are made of God obvious to all men to see and read, to the end they may bee won to repentance; but the Sacrament may not be used to all the world, but onely by such as beleeve Jesus Christ manifested, which is a further ground to me that it begets not grace, but commemorates and confirms onely.

My defence to his sixth Argument.

This Argument is of the same nature with your former, and therefore one answer may serve for both: for if the bounty and goodnesse of God be made known to Christians by the Lords Supper, then by your own Argument they teach Christians to grace, as the works of God, the whole creation manifesting Gods bounty and goodnesse, who thereby win or lead men to repentance, even that part of mankinde that have not the Scriptures, which shall be more cleared hereafter.

Now after I had received these Arguments from a friend, there were sent me from two Ministers of my acquaintance, these five *Quæres* following.

The first *Quere*.

Whether to teach grace and confirme grace be two distinct things or no.

My defence to the first *Quere*.

In my defence I premise, that the visible Sacrament cannot bee without the audible word, and so I say, that the effect of both are distinct in teaching to attain grace, and the confirming and strengthening the grace already wrought.

The second *Quere*.

If they be two distinct things, whether then can the Sacrament of the Lords Supper teach so as to work a change in the affections, or not?

My defence to your second *Quere*.

Whatsoever God hath made teaching, that by his blessing may effect grace to whom it teacheth it: for the Word and Covenant of life is manifested and declared by preaching, *Tit.* 1. 3. Now the way of preaching that was committed to S. *Paul*, was the Scriptures; yet he himself proves to the *Romans*, that the same covenant of life, and word of grace which he taught by the Scriptures, is taught to the Gentiles which have not the Scriptures, by the creatures, as *Rom.* 10. 8. compared with v. 18, 19, 20, 21. and *Psal.* 19. which is confest and acknowledged before in my opposites arguments; but because this is beyond the question in hand, which is to cleare the teaching use of the Sacraments by Scriptures, I will therefore here

wave the point of the creatures teaching without the Scriptures, and prove it clearly by arguments drawn from the Scriptures, that the Lords Supper hath a teaching operation, for the strengthening or confirming use no man questions.

My first Argument.

Whatsoever doth declare or shew forth Christ to a Christian, doth teach Christ.

But the Supper of the Lord doth declare and shew forth his death from the tree of his ignominy, to the throne of his glory.

Therefore the Supper of the Lord declareth and teacheth Christ so often as it is communicated, even untill his second coming.

And ths Argument I thus prove, 1 *Cor.* 11. 26. *For as often* (saith the Apostle) *as yee eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, yee doe shew the Lords death till he come.* Agreeing to which is that of the Prophet when he spake to King *Darius*; *I will shew thee the truth*, said he. Did not he therein declare and teach to him the truth. So also our Lord signifying and shewing the truth to the Apostle *John*, *Revel.* 1. 1. what was it but preaching and manifesting the truth to him?

Dan. 11. 2.

My second Argument.

Whatsoever is ordained of Christ to commemorate, call to mind, or keep in remembrance himselfe or his death, that preaches Christ and the benefit of his death:

But the communicating in the signes of the Lords body and bloud, calls him to mind, and keeps his death in remembrance to Christians.

Therefore the celebration of the Lords Supper teacheth or preacheth the benefit of his death.

And this Argument our Lord himselfe proveth, whose testimony is beyond all, *Luke* 22. 19, 20. *This is my Body which was given for you, doe this in remembrance of me. This Cup is the new Testament in my bloud, which was shed for you.* I beseech you mark two things in these few words for the proving the Argument; that is, first that the Lords Supper, the participation of the Elements, they being set apart by blessing, according to our Lords example, and the Apostles practice, the doing thereof is a remembrance of Christs death. And secondly, that thereby is made known and taught the Covenant of life and salvation in these words, *This Cup is the new Testament in my bloud*: then which nothing can be thought of to prove clearer the teaching use of the Sacrament. And that whatsoever calleth to

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remembrance the truth, preacheth the truth, is plain and apparent: For *Peters* putting the Saints alwayes in remembrance of the truth, thereby preached unto them the truth, 2 *Pet.* 1. 12, 13, 14, 15.

Your third *Quere.*

Whether the act of Christ in admitting of Judas, be exemplary.

My defence to your third Quere.

If the Lord did admit of wicked *Judas* unto the Apostleship, and so to the participation of Baptisme, the Word, Prayer, and to the breaking of bread, as hereafter shall bee particularly proved, then such Ministers that teach that all unregenerate men are to bee kept from the Sacrament, assume that to themselves which neither Gods law nor mans law gives them. For the exception in the law of God, is the case of excommunication; the exception in mans ordinance is ignorance and scandall.

Your fourth *Quere.*

Whether there be like reasons of the Sacrament and the Passeover: If there be the like reason, then it followes not that the Lord did approve of every one that came to the Passeover, 2 Chron. 30. *they were to prepare themselves before they came.*

My defence to your fourth Quere.

You both forget your selves to ask me a reason of Gods ordinances, for to give a reason of them is peculiar to God alone that made them. But this I say, that there is the same use and meaning of the Lords Supper as of the Passeover in the common fellowship of all beleevers, that is, Christ typified and signified by both, Christs death shewed forth and called to remembrance by both, the beleevers informed to grace, and confirmed in grace by both; and the spiritual and truly faithful eat Christs flesh, and drink his bloud by both, they being both sacramentall for that purpose. And as under the law they were to put away the leaven out of their houses, and prepare and sanctifie themselves: so under the Gospel Christians are to examine themselves, repent, &c. For to keep the Feast and holy day the Apostle speaks of, 1 *Cor.* 5. 8. is to keep it with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, as I have briefly declared in my Admonition in *Christians liberty to the Lords Table, p.* 18.

Your fifth *Quere.*

Whether can a naturall man, or a man indued with the common gifts of the Spirit, so try, examine, and judge himselfe, as to come worthily as the Apostle 1 *Cor.* 11. 28. *doth drive at?*

My defence to your fifth Quere.

I answer: An inward or spirituall Christian as an inward, and as outward common Christian as an outward Christian, may either of them discerne the Lords body to participate worthily or profitably, according to their different gifts received, the high way, stony, and thorny grounds, may discern the Lords body, and all the elect Christians unregenerate, by the visible sights thereof in the Sacrament, that therein Christ Jesus is manifested, giving himselfe to death for mankind, and that he is the bread of life, declared and preached first by the words of consecration and prayer, with admonitions then made by the Minister. And secondly, by seeing the wine powred out, the resemblance of the shedding his blood; and then seeing the bread broken, the resemblance of his death and passion, with the consideration of all other circumstances, the violence the Grape suffers in the Wine-presse, and the cruelty offered to the Corn both in the Mill, and in the insufferable hot Oven. And as thus the eye affects the heart, so doth the sweet comfortable refreshing, nourishing, delectable relishing taste also, which are all evident sensible in-lets to the soule of the mercy and goodnesse of God. And because the Christian hath received no other but common gifts, it is but information to him to the speciall grace: but the good ground, the spirituall Christian his communion is sustentation and confirmation in grace to eternall life; according to his speciall faith and grace received of God, he spiritually eats Christs flesh, and drinks his bloud, and is hereby more and more inoculated and rooted in the true Vine Jesus Christ. And in this differing consideration both may discerne the Lords body, and communicate for the better and not for the worse.

From some other friends I have likewise received divers objections against *Judas* his being present at the institution and distribution of the Lords Supper, which principally are these five following:

Their first Objection.

Judas *went immediatly out after the receit of the Sop*, John 13. 30. *Now the Sop was part of the Passeover, therefore* Judas *was gone before the institution of the Sacrament.*

My

My defence to your first Objection.

This objection is against the consent of the three former Evangelists: for they all agree and testifie that as our Lord was eating the Passeover, he took bread and blessed it, and the cup and blessed it, which is the institution of the Lords Supper. And this hee did before they or any of them rose from the Table, *Mat.* 26. 26. *Mark* 14. 21, 22, 23. And S. *Lukes* witnesse is beyond all exception, or any excuse; *Behold the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the Table, Luke* 22. 21. Now *John* doth not at all speak the least tittle of the institution of the Sacrament; and therefore his knowledge of that must be included in his discourse before he makes expresse mention of our Lords rising from Supper, *John* 13. 4. because all the rest testifie that he instituted it as they were eating the Passeover before our Lord did rise from Supper, even while they were eating, at the later end of the Passeover, as at the end of the first course at a feast, the second course is brought in, in that instant Jesus instituted the Supper of his passion. And to this agree the Apostles words, 1 *Cor.* 11. 25. *Also he took the Cup when he had supped*, that is, before he rose from the table, because after he rose, *John* testifies of other actions. And after hee sate down again to them, verse 12. of other discourses. And to this accords S. *Lukes* witnesse also, *Luke* 22. 19. *And he took the bread and gave thanks*, that is, the bread on the Table provided for the Passeover. *Likewise also the Cup after Supper*, that is, as they had finished the supper of the Passeover as aboves aid, no distance of time, but as they were eating the one, Christ instituted and distributed the other. And as the Sop might be a part of the Supper of the Passeover, being a part of the fragments untaken away from the table; so was the bread and wine a part of the provision of the Passeover Supper also, which the Lord blessed to institute the Sacrament with, and yet neither of them for your purpose.

Their second Objection.

It is said in the Institution of the Lords Supper, Luke 22. 19, 20. This is my body which is given for you, &c. *In which words Judas could not be included: for Christ gave not his body, nor shed not his blood for him, and therefore Judas could not be there.*

My defence to your second Objection.

I affirm, that as Christ gave himselfe to death peculiarly and effectually for his elect, so generally and sufficiently for the whole world.

world, according to that of the Apostle, *If any man sin*, (meaning, if any of the justified elect) *we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins, and not only for ours*, (that is, for the elect) *but for the sins of the whole world*, 1 *John* 2. 1, 2. And so saith Saint *Paul*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. *For therefore wee both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that beleeve.* Observe, in the general he hath given himself to be a Saviour, that by and through his death there is now a way opened to life and salvation for all men, without which no man could be saved. And this purchased and purchasing life, *is the true light that enlighteneth every man that commeth into the world*, *John* 1. 9. yet notwithstanding this light and remedy provided, such is the naturall opposition thereunto of all men, which through the first *Adams* offence lie damnable, *Rom.* 5. 18. and although the second *Adam* by his death, hath brought them to an estate saveable; yet notwithstanding this possibility (when none was before) through this new and living way by Christs death, if God did not after a speciall manner in an extraordinary respect make this means that is sufficient for all, effectuall for his elect, they should be condemned with the reprobate world, for loving darknesse more then light, because their deeds are evill: but that God of his everlasting love and pitie, works his owne works in them and for them, of repentance and remission of sins to salvation. And the reprobate part of mankind, and such as perish, they also enjoy all Gods mercies and goodnesse, long suffering and patience, life, food, and all things for the body, the Sun-shine and dewing rain of Gods grace in his ordinances for their soules good, which could not be enjoyed but by the death & mediation of Jesus Christ. So that in these considerations it may bee said Christ hath given himself for all men, and his death in it selfe virtuall for all, but effectuall onely for the elect.

Their third Objection.

Matth. 26. 13. it is said, *All yee shall be offended with me this night. Now Judas could not be offended, therefore Judas was not there: for hee effected his treachery wilfully and for his hire*

My defence to your third Objection.

In the Scriptures the tearm *offence* is diversly taken: there is an offence of impenitency, an offence of imbecillity, of wilfulnesse and weaknesse; *Judas* was guilty of the first offence, of that of impenitency,

penitency, and all the reſt of the Apoſtles of that of weakneſſe and frailty. The Scribes and Phariſees were wilfully and impenitently offended with our Lord, *Luke* 7.30. who rejected the counſell of God againſt themſelves. So was *Herod* againſt *John Baptiſt*, *Mark* 6.20. who notwithſtanding the Prophets powerfull Doctrine, which wrought ſuch a change in the heathen King, as to reſpect the Prophet ſo, as to hear him, to obey and doe many things, to honour his perſon with fear, and his doctrine with gladnes: yet rather then his luſt ſhould want proſecution, he will *Judas-like* take up ſuch an implacable offence againſt him and the truth, ſo as ſuddenly barbarouſly to impriſon him, and there to murder him. Thus *Cain* was offended with *Abel*, *Iſhmael* with *Iſaac*, *Eſau* with *Jacob*. The ſeverall grounds that received not the ſeed to perfection. And bleſſed are they to whom Chriſt is not ſuch a rock of offence.

Their fourth Objection.

I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine untill that day when I drink it new with you in my Fathers Kingdome, Matth. 26.29. *Now* Judas *could not be one that ſhould drink with Chriſt in his Fathers Kingdome.* Ergo *Iudas was not there when our Lord ſpake this.*

My defence to your fourth Objection.

The words of the former verſe are theſe; *This is the blood of the new Teſtament which was ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins*, Now of that many he ſpeaketh, in that he ſaith, *I will drink it new with you in my Fathers Kingdom.* And in this diſtinction he might ſpeak it to the twelve when *Iudas* was preſent. For you may ſay as well *Iudas* was not amongſt the twelve, when he ſaid to them, *Iohn* 6.70. *Have not I choſen you twelve, and one of you is a Devill?* In this diſtinction of election may our Saviour ſpeak in the caſe of perfection.

Their fifth Objection.

I will ſmite the Shepheard, and the ſheep ſhall be ſcattered, Mark 14. 27. And again, *I will Lay down my life for my ſheep*, *Iohn* 10 15, 17. *Now Iudas could not be included, and therefore not preſent, for hee was none of Chriſts ſheep, but a traytor againſt the Shepheard and the Flock alſo.*

My defence to your fifth Objection.

This objection extends not to the queſtion in hand: for the Shepheard was ſmitten after the Inſtitution and diſtribution of the Lords Supper. And ſo alſo after *Iudas* left our Lord and his A-

poſtles

postles company, and went privatly to effect and perfect his treacherous conspiracy. And yet again in the Scripture phrase, there are evill sheep onely lost, as well as good, such as are lost and found in the Scripture sense. And *Iudas* was amongst them, and sent out with them when our Lord said, *Matth.* 10. 16. *Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of Wolves.* And the Prophet *David* knew well there was more bad then good men, when he said, 2 *Sam.* 24. 17. *But these sheep what have they done?*

Now while I was making my defence against all these former oppositions, I received from an honoured friend of mine, this double supposition following.

His first Supposition.

Friend, I pray consider how the Apostle speaks of the Lords Supper, 1 Cor. 10. 15, 16, 17. *I speak as to you wise men, judge you what I say, The Cup of blessing which we blesse, is it not the communion of the bloud of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many, are one bread and one body: for we are partakers of that one bread. Now who are the wise but the regenerate? Who hath communion in the body and bloud of Christ, but the faithfull? Who are the many members that are one body, the many grains that make one loafe, but the Saints? And therefore doth not the Sacrament properly and peculiarly belong to the Saints? Yea, onely ordained for them I suppose.*

My defence to your first Supposition.

Sir, the answer lies in the Apostles words by you mentioned: for to say, *For the cup of blessing which we blesse, and the bread which wee breake, is it not the communion of the body and bloud of Christ?* proves plainly, there are two things considerable in the Sacrament, the elements or signes, bread and wine; the substance or thing signified, the body and bloud of Christ, of both which the regenerate communicate; but the unregenerate, although acknowledging the common faith, they of bread and wine the signes onely. And this is plainly proved by the Apostle by the instance hee gives to the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The multitude as well as the faithfull: they passed through the sea, they had equall benefit of the coole moist cloud in the heat of the day, and of the light hot burning pillar in the dark cold night, and sustained both with the same

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na, Angels food. And yet none did communicate of the ſpirituall ſubſtance the Rock and Truth, but ſuch as were ſpiritual, and thereby could by faith eat Chriſts fleſh, and drink his bloud: and all the regenerate and truly faithfull did ſo; *But with may of them* (ſaith the Apoſtle) that is, with the carnall, impenitent, provoking, unbeleeving part, *God was not well pleaſed, but overthrew them in the wilderneſſe*, notwithſtanding their outward fellowſhip and communion with the faithfull in the outward externall ſhadowes. And the Apoſtle by way of compariſon, ſeems to make the Church of *Corinth*, and the Church of the Jews in the wilderneſſe to agree in the like participation with thoſe that communicate, as in the things communicated, both for the quality of perſons, and diſtinction of ordinances. And if it were not ſo, as you would ſuppoſe, then his exhortation were in vain, *Neither be ye Idolaters, as ſome of them, neither fornicators, nor tempters, nor murmurers, &c.* And if faulty and unregenerate Chriſtians ought not upon any terms to comunicate, then the Apoſtle in Chap. 11. would have forbidden them communion, whereas he uſes onely admonition. And therefore as for the inward and ſpirituall Chriſtians, the ſpirituall part of the ſacrament is peculiar, ſo the externall and common part is for ſuch Chriſtians as are but outward and common, and ordained for them as for the Saints, as before hath been ſhewed.

His ſecond Suppoſition.

If unregenerate men come to communicate in the Sacrament, they intrude and thruſt themſelves to that which God calls them not to; and ſo therein doe that which they ought not: and therefore it is ſin to ſuch to come: for ſo much ſeems to be implied by the Apoſtle in ſaying, They diſcern not the Lords body, *and ſo it proves to bee puniſhment inſtead of nouriſhment. And it may be ſaid to them as to the gueſt that had not on the wedding Garment*, Friend, how comeſt thou in hither? *And their intruſion to the Lords Table, is like the falſe Apoſtles and Prophets thruſting themſelves into all the adminiſtrations of the Goſpel.*

My defence to your ſecond Suppoſition.

The firſt part of this Suppoſition being an inference of the former, by conſequence is anſwered already. And whereas you ſay, It is an intruſion in the unregenerate, and ſo a ſin in them to come to the Sacrament, you muſt ſhew the inhibition: for otherwiſe the text is plain, *Where there is no law, there is no tranſgreſſion.* Secondly, you inſtance the uncloathed mans coming to the Feaſt in the Goſ-

pel, I pray consider, hee was not condemned for coming to the Feast, but for being there without a wedding Garment: for the feast is all the ordinances of God which Christ hath purchased, and freely vouchsafed for all men to communicate in for their salvation, the coming to the feast is the free liberty that all beleevers have in the enjoyment of these ordinances, and to bee fed and clad with the blessed spirituall benefit thereof, is to enjoy the blessing and salvation that comes by these means ordained of God for that end: but to enjoy the administration thereof, and not to be bettered by them, is to be there where we might have been clad, and yet continue naked, fed, and are yet starved. And so it comes to passe, that which is a savour of life to the one, is a savour of death to the other; the first heareth and obeyeth, the second heareth and rejecteth. In the next place I answer, Whosoever taketh upon him to be a Steward of that which is anothers, being not comitted into his hands, presumes of himself, and is an intruder: but this is not proved to be the case of a beleever that is baptized, to communicate in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, therefore the instance fails for your purpose.

Now to put an end to all further disputes upon these two points, that *Judas* did communicate or participate in the Lords Supper with the rest of the Apostles; and that the Sacrament is of a teaching use and operation, as strengthening and confirming, I state both the questions affirmatively and negatively; the affirmative of both questions, that *Judas* was present at the institution and distribution of the Lords Supper, and that the externall elements are of teaching use, is proved plainly by these two Scriptures. *Luke* 22.14. 21. 1 *Cor.* 11.26. But I challenge the whole world to prove the negative, that the elements of the Lords Supper do not teach, and that *Judas* was not present at the institution. And by the way take notice that no absurdity can possibly be a consequence of truth, but erring and mistaking admits of little else: For if the ordinance of the Lords Supper have not a teaching and informing quality, then it is useless to all the unregenerate, yea to all the elect before regeneration, which is such an absurdity to affirme, that Gods outward and common ordinances are of no use but unprofitable: And that God ordained any thing in vain, this is so grosse, that it crosses all Scriptures; for they generally affirm, that all that God hath made or ordained, shew forth & teach his glory, *Psa.* 75.1. Again, if

none

none but the regenerate ſhould communicate of the Supper of the Lord, the paucity is ſuch as the Scriptures witneſſe, that there is but one of a Citie, and two of a Tribe; yea it will alſo follow, that he that bleſſeth and diſtributeth the bread and wine, muſt know the receivers converſion, or elſe he ſinnes in communicating. Into theſe and an hundred more abſurdities will follow, that a wiſe man will bluſh to think of. For if this be ſo, then the ſame things that ſhew forth Chriſt under the Goſpel, ſhall not be ſo uſefull to beleevers as the ſhadowes under the Law. And this were to turn the day into night, the light into darkneſſe. The laſt thing I intended now to publiſh, are ſome few ſhort conferences I have met with in Citie and Countrey, and all may be reduced into theſe two poſitions.

The firſt Poſition.

That ſelected congregations are Churches rightly ordained, and truly conſtituted. And that each congregation are free and independent either from other.

My defence to the firſt Poſition.

In this firſt Poſition we muſt conſider foure things: Firſt, that the gatherers and avouchers of ſelected congregations, are Chriſtians in profeſſion, not in authority, but under Chriſtian authority, and members of Chriſtian congregations, in communion in all Gods externall ordinances, and in all theſe reſpects are thoſe alſo that they gather to themſelves.

Secondly, what is meant by congregations, foraſmuch as there are three ſorts of them; that is, firſt, anthorized congregations; ſecondly, ſelected or covenanted congregations in oppoſition to authority; and thirdly, ſpirituall or voluntary congregations, the communion of Saints.

And the laſt part of the poſition is, what is meant by congregationall Independency.

In the firſt place therefore we muſt conſider, that all ſelected congregations in *England*, teachers and people, are Chriſtians in profeſſion, and already in communion and fellowſhip in the ordinances of the Goſpel, being all under Chriſtian Authority. And notwithſtanding all this, they doe take up and aſſume authority to themſelves, ſo to ſelect and congregate as they doe in oppoſition to authority, to which they are ſubjected of God. And for proofe of this their practiſe, they alledge the example of *John* the Baptiſt. *Mat.* 3.1,2,5. our Saviour Chriſt, *Mark* 1.14 15,16. and the Apoſtles,

Acts 2. 37,38,41,42. *Acts* 11. 20,21,22. Now I deny that any of these Scriptures come home to prove the state of your question, or warrant your practice: For *John*, our Lord, and the Apostles, taught the doctrine of the Gospel, that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah propheſied of to ſuch Jewes as were not beleevers, but oppoſers of it and them. And ſuch by their Miniſtery converted to the faith, which faith is beleeved and confeſſed by ſuch Chriſtians as you ſelect to your ſelves. And ſecondly, the *Greeks* that were converted, *Acts* 11. 20. were ſo converted from heatheniſme to Chriſtianiſme; but this is not your caſe nor practice; for you pervert Chriſtians from ſound and wholſome doctrines, to vain janglings about words that edifie not. And from thoſe Aſſembles aſſigned by Chriſtian authority to ſuch as are of your own ordaining, deviſing and conſtituting, the matter and form thereof is not to be found in Gods word. Now if any of you all could ſhew me a people that you have gained from among the Jewes, and from among the Heathens, to the acknowledgement and confeſſion of the doctrine of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and that by your Miniſtery that they have not onely beleeved the truth, but obeyed it in the power of it, to the effecting in them repentance and remiſſion of ſinnes; then I would ſpeak and change my diſcourſe to another ſenſe; but in regard you aſſume that which you are not, I will onely teſtifie unto you, that that which you doe is not warrantable by Scripture, but it is your own carnall fancy and imagination.

Now the ſecond thing in the Poſition is, what is meant by *Congregation*, and in the threefold diſtinction the firſt is Authorized congregations, which are uſually called Pariſhes; and that is to ſay, ſo many Families aſſigned by authority to make a congregation to communicate in Gods ordinances for the ſalvation of the people. And to that end authority hath ordained a way that their teachers, or teacher, ſhould be a man approved of for able gifts, that a time, or times in the week, is appointed that men ſhould diſpenſe with, neglect and lay aſide their worldly imployments and affairs, and meet together in the communion and participation of Gods ordinances: & to that end have appointed a place for prayer, reading and expounding the Scriptures, for doctrine, exhortation, and preaching, as alſo for communion in baptiſme and the Lords Supper. And are not all theſe things in themſelves good and lawfull? And if they be ſo, what ground have you then for diſlike and

ſeparation?

ſeparation? Nay, have we not ground by the word of God, to give thanks for ſuch governors that are in authority over us? And are not their Ordinances and Rules ſuch, without which wee cannot communicate in the outward ordinances of God? Wherefore let us acknowledge their authority, and obey their rules. But in the next place, the ſelected congregations alledge, 2 *Cor.*6.17. and *Rev.*18.4. for their ſeparation and ſelection, for as much as the holy Ghoſt ſaith, *Come out from amongſt them,* (meaning corrupt Chriſtian congregations) *and be yee ſeparate, ſaith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.* This Scripture, you ſay, proves the ſtate of the queſtion on your part: for you ſay, the Apoſtles here ſpeake of the Antichriſtian church of *Rome*, whoſe filthy unclean doctrines were ſuch, that notwithſtanding they were Chriſtians in profeſſion, yet Gods people could not communicate with them, but they muſt (there was no avoyding it by reaſon of their abominable canons) be defiled with them. And therefore you ſay, theſe texts of Scriptures are a ſufficient ground to ſeparate from Chriſtian congregations. I anſwer, they are a ground to ſeparate from ſuch Antichriſtian congregations as the Apoſtles ſpeak of; but I require of you to prove the abomination, the unclean thing in the authorized congregations in *England*, and then you ſay ſomething: but till that be proved, this Scripture is not for your purpoſe. For the Church of *England* by the Parliaments of reformation in King *Edward* the ſixt, and Queen *Elizabeths* dayes, ſeparated from the falſe doctrines and unclean practices of the church of *Rome*, and then made acts, lawes and ordinances againſt the abominable tenets, and falſe deviſed imagined religion, their Prieſts & Sacrifices, and back't their decrees with the penalty of death; yet notwithſtanding in proceſſe of time, the Prelaticall clergy brought in many corrupt innovations, tending to act again the old uncleanneſſes under new pretences: yet this honorable Parliament hath rooted up and extirpated the Prelaticall Hierarchy root and branch, and ſtill ſit ſpending their wits, ſpirits and pains, for the reforming of Doctrine and Diſcipline, that all congregations may bee regulated in and by the neereſt way agreeable to the word of God. Now conſidering all theſe things we enjoy under this happy authority that is over us, & your condition being under this authority, and ſo placed of God, take heed therefore, nay how will you avoid it, but that your reſiſting this authority, you doe therein reſiſt the Ordinance

dinance of God, and herein walk contrary to Gods word, *Rom.* 13. 1, 2. Nay, do you not fulfil the Prophesie of the Scriptures in presumption and selfe-willednesse, to despise such Governors, and speak evill of such dignities, as the Apostle foretold, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10. How can you possibly cleare your way from the *gainsaying of Core? Jude v.* 11. Nay, is there not a plain parallell between him and his companies gainsaying, and you and your companies gainsayings? *Num.* 16. Did not they which were under authority usurp authority, and in striving against *Moses* & *Aaron*, those that God had set over them, did they not strive against the Lord? *Numb.* 26. 9. I will forbeare the consequence, the Lord give you grace to repent of your striving, resistance, and gainsaying; and murmure no longer against them in saying they impose will-worship upon your consciences in requiring many things there is not a plain word for, if it be not against the word, but agreeing with the sense and meaning of the word, submit your selves to their rules. And if you conceive you know better then the Parliament, your way is to petition, and not to make resistance.

The next consideration is, the Spirituall or voluntary congregation, the communion of Saints. The Prophet *David* calls them *the Assembly of Saints, the Congregation of Saints, Psal.* 89 5. 7. *The house of Aaron his Saint, the house of Israel his chosen one, the house of Levi his Priest, Psa.* 136. and the Apostle, *the houshold of faith, Gal.* 6. 10. *the houshold of God, Eph.* 6. 19. *the house and Church of the living God, 1 Tim.* 3. 15. This church is called, *The Lords body, Col.* 1. 18. 24. because it is made living by the life that is in him; spirituall by his spirit: for they are all begotten and born of the Spirit: and *that which is born of the spirit is spirit, John* 3. 6. as *that which is born of the flesh is flesh.* This communion and whole congregation by the Spirit of God, are all *baptized into one body, and have been made all to drink into one spirit, 1 Corinth.* 12. 13. These are all the children of wisdome, *all sonnes of God and heires of the promises*; these all by regeneration are as *Peter* was, made *living stones*, and are *built of God a spirituall house, a chosen generation, a peculiar people, 1 Pet.* 2. These are the *little flock of sheep & lambs of Christ, to whom the Father hath given the Kingdome*, who by faith have both the earnest and the abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, having fellowship with God their Father, the Son their Saviour, the holy Ghost their comforter, and with each other in joying and sorrowing,

rowing, comforting and lamenting, believing and hoping, suffering and expecting with a mutuall affection the morning and day of salvation, 1 *John* 1. 3. 7 *chap.* 3. 2. These are they that fear the Lord, that receive him and his, and often speak and confer one with another, that are alwayes mindful of his covenant, in whose heart is his Law. These are the Lords Priests, with whom he hath made a covenant of life and peace, who have alwayes the Lord in their thoughts, *Mal.* 2. and 3. chapters. These onely have received an unction from the holy One, that teacheth them all things, 1 *John* 2. 20. These according to the command of their Lord, *give unto Cesar the things that are Cesars, and to God the things that are Gods, Mark.* 12. 17. they love the Lord with all their heart, and their neighbour as themselves: they are all spiritual, and so is their communion and fellowship, and none but such as are spirituall are of this congregation, this communion of Saints?

But a Minister in the North countrey told me, the *Independent congregations* were this communion of Saints, which is the last particular in the first *Position*: To whom I answered, His expression was very strange to me: for I did not find any such name expressing creatures, written in the book of life. And I am sure all the Saints names are written there: Wherefore (said I) hee that gives that name to any people, and those that take that name unto themselves, are both alike to be blamed: for there is no one nor very many creatures, can be said to be *Independent*, but God alone, the great creator. *I am the first and the last, saith the Lord, and besides mee there is no God, Isaiah* 44. 6. *And thou, even thou art Lord alone, Nehem.* 9. 6. There is not a Saint, nor congregation of holy ones can say one to another, I have no need of thee: for they are all members one of another, and every one the members of Christ, *Ephes.* 4. 25 *chap.* 5. 30. 1 *Cor.* 12. I wonder that so many learned that professe that way, and own the name *Independent*, I wonder, I say, that their learning doth not afford them a more proper terme, for as much as under this notion they aim at liberty of conscience. Were they not better to expresse themselves under the names of *Religious freedome*, for this is the effect of your practice, which affirm in this governed church in which you are placed under authority, you ought to have freedome of conscience to exercise your gifts, to gather a people to your selves, and so to make use of all the ordinances of God both for Doctrine and Discipline. And

that

that no power nor authority ought to question you for it, because you ought to have freedome of conscience. This is another conceit of humane invention. Did you ever read of such an expression in the Scriptures, so applied as to free a man from all lawfull obedience to authority? the consequence of truth is sincerity, but the consequence of error is iniquity: For think you not that your freedome of conscience, as you call it, which doth acquit you from all obedience to lawful commands, if you your selfe shall so judge of it, is not your own wilfulnesse to disobey that authority that is over you, a permanent ground for the like freedome for all in particular that are under you, to discl ime your authority, upon the same terms you doe others? See in a word, how you by mistaking the word, overthrow Gods ordinance of government, *Rom.* 13. even that which himselfe is God of, for *he is the God of Gods*, *Dan.* 2. 47. & *the God of order*, 1 *Cor.* 14. 33. Now to make your absurdity more manifest, observe a similitude, make the whole Kingdome of *England* the great nationall church, make the Parliament and assembly of Ministers the Ruling and Teaching Elders in this great church, your selves neither of them, but under this authority. And therefore by the law of God and man ought to live obediently to all their lawfull ordinances. You pretend by religious freedome you ought not to obey them, but rather to follow your own conceivings: Is not this your practice of disobeying your Superiours, a perpetuall ground for disobedience in your inferiours? For that inferiour who ever he be, that saith, none above him hath power to prescribe rules to him, his own practice for ever frees all that are under him from all manner of obedience to him: and so for ever to establish by this doctrine such dissenting and contending, as that there is *no such custom in the churches of God*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 16. for the rule of Gods church is the quite contrary, as the Apostle testifieth, *Rom.* 13. 7. *Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custome to whom custome, fear to whom feare, honour to whom honour.* It is true the Saints and children of God are free, but that is in a spirituall respect, by a spirituall birth, *The truth shall make you free*, *John* 8. 32. *If the Sonne make you free, you shall bee free indeed, verse* 36. but with the right knowledge of this freedome, I find few professors are acquainted.

Their second Position.

When we have truly constituted our church by selecting us a congregation,

gation, then we shall enjoy the spirituall administration of Christs ordinances in their purity, setting up Christ upon his throne, to the happy enjoyment and accomplishment of all the propheſies and promiſes foretold of all by the Prophets and Apoſtles.

My defence to your ſecond Poſition.

There are three things conſiderable in this Poſition alſo: Firſt, what you mean by *Ordinances*: Secondly, their *ſpirituall adminiſtration and purity*: And laſtly, what you mean by *ſetting Chriſt up in his throne to the fulfilling of all the Propheſies and promiſes in the Scriptures.* And firſt for the term *Ordinances*, are they not thoſe that wee have in communion in our publick Aſſemblies, prayer, reading and expounding the Scriptures, preaching, and in communicating in baptiſme and the Lords Supper? Is not the word of God the ſame in publick congregations, as amongſt you: the ſame in a common and the ſame in a ſpeciall adminiſtration? Is not prayer the ſame in both with the ſpirituall, the ſacrifice of a broken heart, with the reſt, a preſentation of perſons and words? Is not baptiſme the ſame in the outward as in the inward conſideration? The Lords Supper the ſame in the corporall ſignes, as in the ſpirituall grace, that as the carnall Chriſtian through the common faith, eats the bread, and drinks the wine; ſo the ſpirituall Chriſtian by juſtifying faith, eats Chriſts fleſh, and drinks his bloud. You confeſſe all this to bee true; but you ſay the difference lies in the point of the purity of the ordinances, the manner of adminiſtration and communion in them, which is the ſecond conſideration in the *Poſition*. And you ſay, for want of the ſpirituall adminiſtration, the authorized congregations have loſt the purity of all Gods ordinances, and thereby continue the abominable and unclean thing amongſt them. And you give three inſtances to prove this: Firſt, that our Miniſters are not truly called: ſecondly, ſay ſome of you, we alter the ordinance of baptiſme: thirdly, you all with one conſent condemne us, for admitting of mixt congregations. To the firſt I anſwer, Presbyters by the Parliament are ordained to examine, approve, and allow of mens gifts, and for their ſpirituall gifts received of God, to appoint and allow of them therefore to be Miniſters according to the Apoſtles rule, 1 *Tim.* 3. 10 *chap.* 4. 14. againſt which there is no other externall rule to be ſhewed in the Scriptures. And ſecondly, whereas many of you ſay, we alter the ordinance of baptiſme, it is more then you can prove by Scripture: for although it be ſaid,

Matth. 28. 19. *Go yee therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c.* In your own understanding of that place, it doth not say therefore as you say, ye shall not baptize the infants of beleevers, who you therein forbid to be brought to Christ, contrary to the command of our Lord, *Matth.* 19. 14. *Suffer little children to come,* or to be brought, *unto me*; for so much the Text inferres, *and forbid them not to come unto me, &c.* Which inhibition of yours is contrary also to Gods own ordinance and command, *Exod.* 12. *Gen.* 17. which plainly commands that which you deny, that children are to communicate if their parents were beleevers. According to which ordinance of God the Apostles testifie to all the world, *Acts* 2. *The promise belongs to you and to your children, and to all that are afarre off, even to so many as the Lord our God shall call*; as if he should say, whosoever God calls to beleeve, the covenant belongs to them and to their infants, as the covenant belonged to *Abraham* and to all strangers that should come to beleeve the truth, to them and to their children also. And this is the reason that we find it written, and there are many examples of it in the Apostles times, that when a man came to beleeve the truth, the doctrine they taught them, not onely they themselves but their households were baptized, 1 *Cor.* 1. as the household of *Stephanas*, and the rest. And the Apostle resolves the question to the Church of *Corinth*, saith he to this effect, *If one of the parents be a beleever, then are your children holy*, that is, then have they right to the externall ordinance of God; and in this sense the Apostle saith, *God hath shewed me not to call any man unholy, or unclean*, that is, whosoever beleeveth Jesus Christ come in the flesh, may be baptized, although before a Gentile, and they and their household have right to Gods holy ordinance, as *Cornelius* and his household, *Acts* 10. And when you can prove that the Minister taking infants into his arms, praying for them, and washing them in the name of Christ (or *Abrahams* circumcising of *Ishmael* at the command of God) is more then Christs taking them into his arms and blessing them, then you will say something, till then you declare your own fancy, and say nothing to the purpose. And for mixt congregations as you find fault with, I pray, are you sure your selves are not weeds and cockle, but good corn? If your selves were spirituall, then you would know and understand the meaning of Gods spirit, that both must be let alone till the harvest, the end of the world, as our Lord saith, for till then there is no separation,

Matth.

Matth. 13.30. but wicked *Cain* may bring and offer his sacrifice with *Abel* the righteous; persecuting *Ismael* may communicate in the ordinance of God with persecuted *Isaac*: the bitter and unclean hypocrite *Simon Magus*, may bee washed or baptized in flesh, as well as *Philip*, *Peter* and *John*, and the holy ones of God, *Acts* 8. And although our Lord knew the Devillish treacherous heart of *Judas*, yet his participation in the ordinances, neither in Baptisme, the Passeover, or the Lords Supper, did not prejudice, nor no way hindered the spirituall communion of the faithfull, for he participated in prayer, *Mat.* 6. in preaching, *Mat.* 10. in baptisme, *Mat.* 3. 15. in the Passeover and Supper of the Lord, *Luke* 22.14, 15, 21. and yet none of Christs little holy ones makes your complaint; for his carnall presence did no way detrisie their spirituall fellowship.

And in the third and last place, we are to understand what is meant by setting up Christ upon his Throne, and the fulfilling and accomplishing of all the propheſies and promises witnessed by the Apostles and Prophets. And here now as with one consent you doe all of you unanimously affirm, that all the Propheſies in the whole Scriptures, are fulfilled in your congregated companies, and that in doing that which you doe, in assuming to your selves power to select congregations, and prescribing to them the rules of Christ, as you call them, although indeed they are rules of your own making, yet you therein set up Christ upon his throne, and that your churches, wayes, and devised order, the matter nor manner thereof, being that which is not to be found in Scriptures, yet you give it out to the world, that by you, and in your church government, is fulfilled the propheſie of the new heavens, and new earth, promised of God, and witnessed by the Prophet *Isaiah*, and the Apostle *Peter*, the heavenly countrey and citie that *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob sought for*, *Heb.* 11. *the new Jerusalem that John saw come down from God out of heaven, and Sion that holy and heavenly citie, that great and strong citie that God hath appointed salvation for walls and bulwarkes*, *Jer.* 23.5.6. *chap.* 34.15,16. *Ezek.* 37.26,27,28. *chap.* 48.35. and that of your gatherings it may be said, *the Lord is there*, applying to your selves *Sions own happines*, *Zeph.* 3.13,14,15,16, &c. *Isa.* 49.21.

Is it possible there should be such grosse blindnes in these daies, in which men say they see, and are in the light, wherfore their great darknesse, and all their bold avouchments like empericks, which fil market places with noises, and churches and chambers, publick

meetings and meeting-houses with voyces, those that have written such volumes, and printed such books to make known and advance these false doctrines, to the belying the Prophets, the wounding, scaring, and killing the truth their witnes and testimony, the truth of God in a word will reprove them, strip them, and discover their nakednes and shame to all posterity, by a few questions resolved by the letter of the Scriptures, which is as clear light as the Sun-shine at noon dayes, and yet these flying Bats cannot see the truth and light thereof. The first question is, *What is the throne of Christ?* Secondly, *when the time shall bee that Christ shall sit in his own throne.* Thirdly, what is meant by *Sion*, mentioned by the Prophets. And fourthly, what we are to understand of the *Churches glorious condition, her deliverance and perfection* the Scriptures so often speak of.

Now Christs throne is, that which he calls his *own throne*, as a note of distinction between *his throne* and *his Fathers throne*; and therefore he saith, *Rev.* 2. 21. *To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne.* And of this throne our Lord speaks, *Mat.* 19. 28. *When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, verily yee also that have followed me in the regeneration, shall also sit, &c.* And of this throne of the Sonnes, and not called the Fathers, is that throne the Apostle speaks of, *Heb.* 1. 8. *But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a scepter of right eousnesse is the scepter of thy kingdom.* And the Prophet calls him *God* also, *Psal.* 45 6. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever & ever, &c.* To this kingly throne of God there belongs a kingdom, a Church of Saints, which he wil not perfect and accomplish till his return from heaven, his coming again, his appearing, which is the second consideration propounded, *the time when Christ shal be set upon his throne*; and that is then (saith the Prophet) *Psal.* 102. 16. *When the Lord shall build up Sion, he shall appear in his glory, &c. Even then* (saith the Apostle, 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. *When the Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead, then shal be his appearing and kingdome.* Which propheſies are confirmed for truth by our Lords own testimony, *Mat.* 25. 31, 32. *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, &c.* & *v.* 3. Then mark, *Then shal the King say unto them on his right hand, Come yee blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdome prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Note againe, here is the reward, the inheritance, the kingdome, all this world long preparing and promised, which makes me wonder, that so many seers have overseen & mist

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the reading of these Scriptures, which in their literall sense plainly preach, that Christ shall not be advanced into his *own throne*, in his *own kingdom*, till the harvest at the end of this word, *Mat.* 13.30.40. And therefore the holy Ghost uses the future tense in all his expressions. As the Apostle saith, *It is the world to come whereof wee speake*, when he speaks of these things, *Heb.* 2.5 *even of the throne, dominion, and kingdome of Christ.* In the third place, we are to consider, how we are to understand the terme *Sion* in the Scriptures meaning. In which we must mind a double respect, first, as the term *Sion* is referred to the Churches estate of regeneration in this present life. And secondly, as it is referred to the Churches estate of perfection in the life that is to come. In the first sense the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks of her, *chap.* 2.3. *For out of Sion shall go forth a law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.* And again, *chap.* 40.9. *O Sion that bringeth good tidings, O Jerusalem, that bringeth good tidings, say, Behold your God* So saith another Prophet, *Out of Sion the perfection of beauty, God hath shined, Psa.* 50.2. even shined forth in the clear revelation of the truth and law of life, *the covenant of grace*, as the Apostle saith, *Eph.* 3.10. The manifold wisdome of God is made known by the Church, which the holy Ghost calls *the keepers of truth, Isai.* 26. agreeing with the Apostles testimony in another place, *Gal.* 4.26. *But Jerusalem which is above, and from above, is free, and is the mother of us all.* Now in another sense, and in the second consideration, *Jerusalem*, or *Sion* so named, is to be understood of her *perfection and glory, her deliverance and salvation*, as *Isai.* 26.1. *In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Iudah, We have a strong Citie, salvation will God appoint for walls & bulwarks, nothing shall enter therein but the righteous nation that keepeth truths*; & these can be no other but the Saints of God. Indeed they only are *the righteous & holy nation, a chosen, royal, blessed, peculiar people*, 1 *Pet.* 2.9. And of these the Prophet *Ezekiel* speaks of, *None uncircumcised in heart and flesh, shall enter into this holy City.* And this is the Citie, the glorious and magnificent Tabernacle spoken of throughout the whole Scriptures; the apprehension and contemplation of which makes another Prophet break out into a ravished spirituall expression, considering the exceeding glory of her to come, of whom it may be said in this present life, that she slumbers, possesses weaknesse, contempt, nakednesse in the sight of men, seeming to die, to be forsaken, desolate, troden down under feet, no man no more regarding her then the dirt under their feet.

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And yet in that morning of her Lords coming, so exceedingly altered, beyond all comparison, as makes the holy man, *Isa.* 52. 1. make acclamation in the words of admiration, *Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Sion, put on thy beautifull garments, O Ierusalem the holy Citie: for from henceforth there shal no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean: for* (saith he) *her Officers shall be peace, and her exactors righteousnes, violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise, Isai.* 60. 17, 18. Oh when can this strength, these beautifull garments be injoyed by the faithfull, this separation from the wicked, when shall the oppressor, the strong and violent, hatred of the wicked cease, and wasting and destruction be at an end, but at the resurrection? And where can *Sions* deliverance and glory be, but in the world to come, in the new heavens and new earth of the Lords own making, and not of mans devising, wherein the righteous and righteousnesse shall be no longer a sojourner and stranger, but a ruler and a dweller? *Behold* (saith the Lord) *I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shal not be remembred, nor come into mind, Isai.* 60. 17. The former are these present, that are defiled and polluted; but those that the Lord hath promised to make, shall succeed the passing away and desolation of these that are now, and shall remain for ever unmoveable and unshaken. And this shall be doe at his second comming, in the day of the Lord, in the day of God, as the Prophet before declareth, and as here the Apostle testifieth, 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. 12. This is *Sion* in her glory, the holy citie, the new Jerusalem. And *Rev.* 21. 1. 2. when the beloved disciple saw in the Revelation of God, the promise of the new heavens, and the new earth fulfilled, then in them he saw this citie, this church in her glory, prepared as a bride adorned, that is, beautifully cloathed to marry wth her husband: and the great voyce of the Lord declared it, *Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he wil dwel with them, and they shal be his people, and God himself shal be with them, and be their God.* And this is the accomplishment of the covenant, the salvation of the whole house of Israel, when the Lord shall wipe away all teares from their eyes. And that there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. *And hee that sate upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me write, for these words are true and faithfull.* These true and faithfull words shall

shall rise up in judgement against all such blind guides that teach their followers against the very letter of the text: for though the word saith, this estate of the churches perfection shall bee in that time when it shall be that there is no death, for that shall be swallowed up in victory, yet they dare to affirm to their deceived followers, that the glorious Citie is a fancie of their own framing, even in this life, while death as an enemie raigning over them, surely they cannot be said to be bright men, but blackmen, dark-men, no light men, men of this world, and not of that to come, men in the flesh, and not in the spirit; for the new heavens, and the new earth are the inheritance of the Saints, this new Jerusalem is the City with foundations, whose builder and maker is God, the better resurrection, the promise, the heavenly countrey, that *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* lookt for, as all the other Patriarchs did, who when they were in this world professed themselves pilgrimes and strangers, as all their fathers were, *Heb.* 11. Now as by this that hath been said, it plainly appeares, that a multitude of unwary teachers, have perverted the Scriptures, in applying them to their carnal conceited meanings. And as these, so most of all other Scriptures they doe alledge: for not till the Lords coming at the generall resurrection, can come the churches deliverance and salvation, the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. And this Doctrine is justified by the testimony of Gods Spirit, saying, *Hee shall send Jesus which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive and contain untill the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets since the world began*, *Acts* 3. 19, 20, 21. Heare all you that have learned to speak contrary to the truth, the words and meaning of the holy Messengers and Prophets of God, and repent, or else the Prophets themselves wil condemne you. And that you may know your indictment, behold and heare what they say further in evidence against your doctrines: For thus saith the Prophet *Zephany* of the churches estate of the life to come, which you affirm is meant of this life, *The remnant of Israel* (saith he) *shall not doe iniquity, nor speak lies, neither shall a deceitfull tongue bee found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down and none shall make them afraid. Sing, O daughter of Sion, shout O Israel.* Me thinks it is the same our Lord saith, *I will see you again, and wil turn your sorrow into joy, never again to lose it*, John 16. And so the Prophet goes on, *Bee glad and rejoyce with all thy heart, O daughter of Jerusalem, the Lord hath*

h th taken away thy judgements, he hath cast out thy enemies, the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee, thou shalt not see evill any more, Zeph. 3 13. Is not this the Lords return again to his church for her everlasting comfort? And of this return of our Lord, and deliverance of his church, are all other Scriptures to be understood, which you have mentioned. Then and not before will the Lord perform that good thing promised by *Ieremy*, *chap.* 23. 14. *Behold, the dayes come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing I have promised to the house of Israel, and the house of Iudah. In those dayes and at that time will I cause the branch of righteousnesse to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgement and righteousnesse in the land; in those dayes shall Iudah be saved, and Ierusalem shall dwell safely. And this is the name wherewith he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousnes. And in the day of the Lords return to this Citie, the Lambs wife, it shall be said, The Lord is here*, *Ezek*, 48. 15. But to leave these mistakers to their great mistakings, I will speake one word to the blessed expecters, the sonnes of *Sion*, the children of hope, Be comforted, beloved, for now it is but twenty dayes and the funerall day will come of *Babylon*, the sonnes of confusion; and it will hardly exceed fourty foure dayes more, but your blessed expectation will be accomplished: for in the midnight of that day there shall be a great cry made, Behold the Bridegroome cometh, and then blessed Bride go out to meet him for evermore to enjoy him with unspeakable joy, to whom be glory world without end. *Amen.*

Wherefore he that hath eyes let him see, and he that hath eares let him heare; and he that hath attained to a good heart, let him understand.

FINIS.